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O.N.C.F

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To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing today to vehemently oppose the plans following the purchase of the EJ&E rail lines by Canadian National that run through the village of Barrington. The Village of Barrington and its residents are facing a truly disastrous situation that will have monumental impact on the quality of our lives and our community.

We moved to Barrington a little over 5 years ago after relocating from San Francisco. The Chicago area had been our home before a short time in California. When we returned home with our two young children we spent many months looking for just the right place to raise our family. When growing up along the lakefront in Glencoe, Barrington was always known as the town with the beautiful hills, lots of little lakes, and room enough for plenty of horses. We were drawn here because it offers an amazing school district, ease of access to Chicago and all that the city has to offer, as well as the feeling of being where you have room to breath. Canadian National is planning to take all of that away. The impact of the proposed purchase and Canadian Nationals plans to make the EJ&E tracks the bypass for Chicago rail traffic will rob Barrington and its residents of the life that as a community, we have worked so hard to create and maintain. The adverse impact of Canadian Nationals plans for the tracks is staggering.

Barrington is an unusual town in that the town is dissected by train tracks which all flow through the center of town. We do not have just one set of tracks that bisect the town, but rather two sets that can bring everything to a screeching halt. The traffic flow through and around Barrington has been a problem as long as we have lived here. Many people have worked to try to find answers to elevate the congestion as the town suffers through increased truck traffic from Interstate 90 up Route 59 to the far-northern suburbs and as the area continues to grow with new home construction. The impact of the increased train traffic and the resulting gridlock makes the situation unimaginable.

As a young family who live a few blocks from the tracks we are also *extremely* concerned about the health and safety of our children as well as the environmental impact of the increased train traffic. We chose our house where we did for some very specific reasons:

- 1) My husband is a very serious asthmatic, as is my son, so the distance and accessibility of the emergency medical assistance was a major issue ~ we chose a house only 5 blocks from the police and fire department in the event of an emergency, but the tracks lie between us. This has never been an issue but could become one in the future if you allow CN to purchase the tracks and move forward with their plans to allow more than 20 trains per day to pass on the tracks. Beyond our family, you will now be allowing frequent trains which take an average of 6 minutes to pass between the ambulance, police and fire department on the one side of the tracks and the hospital on the other. In either situation (you are north of town in crisis and waiting for the train to pass for the help to arrive or you live south of town

and the help has arrived but can't get a critical patient to the hospital because they are stuck waiting for the train to pass), time is of the essence and the trains can mean life or death.

2) When we bought our house, the plans had been submitted and the \$14,000,000 bond issue had passed to purchase the land that was formerly the Jewel Tea property just two blocks away in order to create the award-winning Citizens Park. The Villagers struggled tirelessly to make Citizens Park a reality ~ to create a space where families could gather, where children could play basketball or tennis or play on the playset in the fresh air rather than adding to the health crisis of an increasingly sedentary childhood, where kids can go to summer camp to study bugs and flowers, where we could walk or bike along the paths which now connect to the natural beauty of the wetlands of Cuba Marsh, where imaginations can run wild up in the trees while you sit and listen to the sounds of the birds in the unique Pepper Family Treehouse. This proposed plan will absolutely destroy all that we as a village have worked for. It won't be safe for the kids to run and play for fear of getting too close to the tracks. Imaginations won't be able to run wild interrupted constantly by the sounds of train whistles and the noise of the tracks. We won't be able to raise a generation of children who respect and cherish the environment and the beauty of nature when we have 20 or more trains running through the park every day. The impact to our children's health from the pollution alone is frightening.

3) We looked carefully at the homes in Barrington in relation to the schools that our children would attend. Our son is highly gifted and does not attend our neighborhood school, but takes a bus to the Gifted Program that is housed at a school in the center of town. As with nearly all of his classmates, and thousands of other students in the district, his bus crosses the EJ&E tracks every day. Barrington school buses cross the EJ&E tracks 370 to 400 times in a single day as they transport thousands of students to classrooms throughout the district. The impact that Canadian National's plans have for all of these students is horrendous. Remember that it impacts each and every student and teacher in the district, not just the ones on the buses. Classes will not be able to start because buses full of children will be delayed at train crossings. Even if they don't get stuck at the crossings as the train itself passes, the resulting traffic will be catastrophic. The impact that the existing trains have on the traffic patterns throughout Barrington is incredibly problematic, we can't even begin to imagine what will happen if you allow CN to permit four additional major railroads access to these tracks as well. The lost educational time in the classroom directly impacts all of our children and the quality of the education that we as taxpayers have paid for. And this doesn't even touch the more frightening of situations: many of us lived in the Chicago area in the early 1990's when a school bus full of students in Palatine got stuck on the tracks and was hit by a passing train, killing and seriously injuring many of the kids aboard the bus. Given the number of students who are transported to and from schools throughout the district combined with the sheer volume and frequency of CN's proposed train traffic and the resulting traffic gridlock, the situation that is created is a real danger to our children.

4) When we looked to move to Barrington, we looked at the town of Barrington, which was clearly heavily invested in a renewal of its downtown business district. Grants were being paid to storeowners to update and beautify the business district. Taxpayers were greatly supporting renewal efforts that would encourage restaurants and business to come to Barrington and increased customer volume was making it profitable to do so. After years of development, the increased number of trains and the impact of that increased volume will jeopardize all of that. The noise, traffic delays, and pollution will not draw customers in but will rather turn them away. Our commercial property values will plummet, customer traffic will plummet and businesses will have no choice but to leave. This doesn't even take into consideration the impact that the frequent train noise, pollution, safety concerns, traffic concerns, and educational impact will all have on the property value of our homes. The results are dramatic.

The residents of Barrington live here because we value education; we value the feeling of living in the country with the amenities of a more urban area; we want our children to have the safety and environmental health to run and play outside. We are a safe and peaceful community that is being

threatened. *We need your help.* We need your help to protect our children's safety and their health. We need your help to protect the quality of their education and their opportunity to succeed and flourish. We need your help to protect our environment - the wetlands of Cuba Marsh, the birds and wildlife of Citizen's Park, the air that our children breathe. We need your help to maintain access to grocery stores, drug stores, the library and schools. We need your help to protect our sense of community and the investment that we have made in our educational system, our business district, our emergency systems. We need your help to protect the investment that we have made in our community, our children and our homes in this already difficult time. Please help us to save Barrington! Only agree to the proposed acquisition if Canadian National demonstrates ways in which it will mitigate the severe damage that the dramatic increase in train traffic will have on our community, our homes and our children. Please help us.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard W. Kick", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard W. Kick

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle A. Thomas Kick", with a large, looping initial "K" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kyle A. Thomas Kick